

**Subject:** NOAA NIDIS Implementation Team first teleconference – Call for actions

**Date:** April 5, 2005

**Participants:** Bob Livezey, Mike Brewer (OS4), Tom Karl, Peter Steurer (NCDC), Jim Laver, Doug Lecomte (CPC), Fred Toepfer (NCEP), Hualu Pan, Ken Mitchell (EMC), Geoffrey Bonnin (OHD), Mike Dion (OS2), and Jiayu Zhou (OST)

NOAA NIDIS Implementation Team held a teleconference on 5 April 2005. This meeting is considered as a call for actions by all six climate and weather water programs (observation, prediction and projection, decision support, environmental modeling, hydro and local warning and forecasts), to begin to address NIDIS in Program Baseline Assessments (PBA). Bob Livezey, the team leader, gave a history review and background information about NIDIS and looked forward to the future development. Following is a summary based on the meeting notes.

### **Background and History:**

Go back to 2000. National Drought Policy Commission made a report to the Congress. In that report there was a goal 2, which essentially covered monitor and prediction activities with respect to drought. After the policy commission was dissolved, a group organized by USDA that was cross agencies and non-government organizations continued to keep the visibility of the drought problems in focus and bring it attention to the Congress. That commission subsequently put together a number of recommendations to the Congress, one of which is that NOAA would lead the goal 2 activities. Later on, through a number of steps, NOAA eventually partnered with Western Governor Association (WGA) to conduct a year long set of workshops, discussions and negotiations that finally let release of the so called NIDIS report by WGA last summer. In that report are laid out a long list of recommendations, addressing a number of aspects of NIDIS. The recommendations emphasize principally those monitoring and prediction activities that were laid out by goal 2 in the original report to the Congress, but also have heavy impacts and planning flavors as well. That report names and recommends NOAA to lead the implementation of NIDIS, specifically lead a broad base implementation team. Regardless of any new legislation or new resources available, it recommended that this interagency implementation would get on with coordinating activities under the existing authority and resources. Two years ago, drought legislation established National Drought Council and housed that council in USDA. It authorized NIDIS and named NOAA again as NIDIS lead. It didn't go anywhere last year, but has been reintroduced recently. NIDIS is now on the radar at the White House. It was brought to attention first by a letter from WGA. The CENR Subcommittee on Natural Disaster Reduction has named drought as one of its eight disasters. A report is being developed by that subcommittee. A few weeks ago, the interagency working group on earth observation named NIDIS as "near term opportunity". There is a planning process going on right now. A document in draft form is under development and a meeting will be held in May.

### **Task Assignment**

Clearly, NOAA is to lead the implementation of NIDIS. We are at the point, where the Admiral expects to see substantial amount of forward motions. The President's budget, the FY06 Blue Book, explicitly referred to two initiatives as supporting NIDIS. One of them is COOP modernization and the other is the water resource initiative. Subsequent to the release of the WGA report, there was an informal agreement between David Johnson and OAR that any implementation coordinating office will reside in NWS and the most appropriate place for that would be in OST. Gary Carter, Greg Mandt and the climate and the weather and water goal leads Chet Koblinsky and Frank Kelly get together with Bob Livezey and gave him a charge to lead the NOAA NIDIS

Implementation Team. Now this team, which represents three weather and water and three climate programs, has three recommended jobs. Two are quick turnaround activities.

*Quick turnaround*

1. **Ensure that NIDIS is prominently represented and well articulated across the board in six programs FY06 Program Baseline Assessments** and utilize PPBES process to eventually obtain resources to step up the NIDIS. The primary job is to represent NIDIS in each of six program baseline assessments in a cross-reference way, forming a coherent drought prediction research program and addressing specifically the physical side of the drought prediction problems, not the impact side. All programs will also have to look at the NIDIS document and decide to what extent each program needs to address other aspects of NIDIS besides a focused drought research program. The biggest gap in NOAA's plan from FY06 through FY11 can be found specifically in drought observing system and focused drought research program. As ideas developing and being put together to make the draft, it is important to share the materials with team members, especially with Mike Brewer and Jiayu Zhou. They will direct traffic overall in this exercise. **The draft for PBA will be due in the end of May.**
2. **Provide review and feedbacks at any stage of IWGEO NIDIS implementation plan exercise** for the near term opportunity. One key part of that plan is a number of decision support tools and the development of integration strategy that essentially has both horizontal (connecting various decision support tools) and vertical (between national and local levels) dimensions. It is required to ensure two things in that plan. One is that NOAA's leadership is clearly reflected, and the other is that there is nothing inconsistent with what NOAA plans are and what we think our role in NIDIS should be.

*Less time constrained*

3. **Propose a NOAA plan for managing the implementation team.** This is not an implementation plan, but a plan for managing implementation team. NOAA has to have an office to manage this broad base implementation team. (Maybe eventually there would be a formal interagency office. But NOAA needs to have a real functioning focal point to get moving in 06, regardless of whether we have legislation or other authority.) This plan will have to address alternatives for that office, e.g. how it is staffed, how to get resources to be functioning, how to train the other agencies in the planning process, how to go to the external community to help NOAA with the specific architecture for NIDIS, including both horizontal and vertical dimensions. The plan will also have to address terms and references for NOAA's leadership, and what our responsibilities will be for that leadership and what is the responsibilities of the office will be. With the presumption that NOAA will activate its leadership of NIDIS implementation early in 06, Bob Livezey is going to put together an outline and distribute it to the team members in the next few weeks. Hope this managing plan will be completed in mid-summer.

In the discussion, it is recognized that there are three big players in NIDIS besides NOAA, i.e. USDA, Department of the Interior, (USGS, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Bureau of Reclamation (BR)) and the Corps of Engineers. The NIDIS implementation needs to have BLM, BR and the Corps of Engineers engaged. Team members are asked to look into the plan and ensure where they are plugged into appropriately and provide feedbacks.